

EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM

The Emergency Alert System (EAS) is another alert tool that can rapidly disseminate emergency information to the general public. It can be initiated by local, state and federal officials. A national EAS alert may be activated during a national crisis, by the President of the United States. A local EAS alert may be activated in response to local events such as severe weather, floods, industrial accidents, civil disorders, or any event that poses a danger to life or property. The Amber Alert is part of the EAS system and is initiated by law enforcement.

The EAS utilizes radio and television broadcasters to relay emergency information to citizens. These messages interrupt programming on local television and radio stations and provide viewers and listeners with warnings and instructions on how to react in the event of an emergency.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

The Emergency Notification System (ENS) is another mass notification service available to emergency management officials. During an emergency or disaster, it enables emergency management officials to contact hundreds or thousands of affected individuals in a specific area within minutes because of its high-calling capacity and the accuracy of its geographic information system mapping and database.

The ENS can be activated by designated emergency management officials of a city, county or other jurisdiction. An ENS message, which includes a warning and instructions for residents, is created and sent immediately to phone numbers in the area of an emergency. When citizens in the area receive the call, a recording will give them important directions that may include evacuation, shelter-in-place, or other instructions.

WHO CAN YOU CALL?

If you would like to learn more about emergency preparedness, schedule an emergency management official to speak to your organization, or ask for Tex, the Shelter-In-Place Turtle, to visit your school, call one of the following numbers:

SAN ANTONIO

San Antonio Fire Department
Public Information Office at
207-6634. Or call 3-1-1.

BEXAR COUNTY

Bexar County Office of Emergency Management at
335-0300.

COMAL COUNTY

Call 2-1-1. You will be referred to the Comal
County Office of Emergency Management.

Call 9-1-1 for all emergencies. However, if possible, refrain from using telephones except for true emergencies in order to keep phone lines open for emergency operations associated with an event.



ALL-HAZARDS EMERGENCY/NOAA WEATHER ALERT RADIO

The All-Hazards Emergency/NOAA Weather Alert Radio is your official source for civil emergency alerts and weather warnings 24 hours a day, seven days a week. These alerts may come directly from your local emergency management office or from the National Weather Service. And through the use of SAME technology, you can program your radio to only receive all-hazard alerts for the county in which you live.



The all-hazards capability of these radios allows local emergency officials to utilize National Weather Service Radio to broadcast specific instructions in the event of a non-weather related emergency such as an act of terrorism or a hazardous chemical release. The use of SAME technology allows the National Weather Service to activate the Emergency Alert System (EAS) to allow an emergency message to be disseminated to a specific area. You also can program your radio to receive the latest weather information from the National Weather Service such as flash flood alerts and tornado warnings in addition to seven-day forecasts for South Texas. These radios are equipped with an alarm tone feature that will alert you, even if you are asleep, to give you information and instructions during civil emergencies, severe weather events or other life-threatening situations.

MIDLAND ALL-HAZARDS EMERGENCY/NOAA WEATHER ALERT RADIO (MODEL WR-100 S.A.M.E.) ARE NOW AVAILABLE AT AREA H.E.B. GROCERY STORES AT A DISCOUNT PRICE.

To help you program your radio:

- Look for instructions on an in-store display
- Check the www.readysouthtexas.gov website
- Call 1-888-697-7263

(Be sure to use a 6-digit programming code designated for Bexar or Comal county)

The Midland 18-STR strobe light also is available as an accessory. The strobe light serves as a visual alert for the deaf and hard of hearing. It plugs into the accessory jack of the All-Hazards Emergency/NOAA Weather Alert Radio (WR-100) and provides an attention-getting strobe for civil emergency alerts or severe weather.

ALL-HAZARDS EMERGENCY/NOAA WEATHER ALERT RADIO PARTNERS



Learn how to keep your community safe by visiting
WWW.READYSOUTHTEXAS.GOV



Understand. Plan. Act.



**HOMELAND SECURITY IS
EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY.
WORKING TOGETHER, WE ALL
CAN BE BETTER PREPARED.**



www.readysouthtexas.gov



Homeland security is no longer solely law enforcement's responsibility. It calls for a collaborative effort among citizens, corporations and the government.

Terrorists are working to obtain biological, chemical, nuclear and radiological weapons and the threat of an attack is very real. The City of San Antonio, Bexar County and Comal County are working with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to strengthen our local and national security. Whenever possible, we want to stop terrorist attacks before they happen. All Americans should begin a process of learning about potential threats so we are better prepared to react during an attack. While there is no way to predict what will happen, or what your personal circumstances will be, there are simple things you can do now to prepare yourself and your loved ones.

Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling a supply kit and developing a family communications plan, are the same for both a natural or man-made emergency. However, there are important differences among potential terrorist threats that will impact the decisions you make and the actions you take. With a little planning, you can be better prepared for the unexpected.

1 Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for at least three days, maybe longer.

While there are many things that might make you more comfortable, think first about fresh water, food and clean air.

Consider putting together two kits. In one, put everything needed to stay where you are and make it on your own.

The other should be a lightweight, smaller version you can take with you if you have to get away.

PREPARE A KIT OF EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

You'll need a gallon of water per person per day. Include in the kits canned and dried foods that are easy to store and prepare. If necessary, include warm clothes and a sleeping bag for each member of the family.

Start now by gathering basic emergency supplies – a flashlight, a battery-powered radio, extra batteries, a first aid kit, toilet articles, prescription medicines and other special things your family may need. Many potential terrorist attacks could send tiny microscopic "junk" into the air. Many of these materials can only hurt you if they get into your body, so think about creating a barrier between yourself and any contamination. It's smart to have something for each member of the family that covers their mouth and nose.

Plan to use two to three layers of a cotton t-shirt, handkerchief or towel to cover your mouth and nose. Or consider filter masks (HEPA-N95 Particulate Respirator or equivalent) readily available in hardware stores. It is very important that the mask or other material fit your face snugly so that most of the air you breathe comes through the mask, not around it. Do whatever you can to make the best fit possible for children.

Also, include duct tape and heavyweight garbage bags or plastic sheeting that can be used to seal windows and doors if you need to create a barrier between yourself and any potential contamination outside.

2 Make a plan for what you will do in an emergency.

Be prepared to assess the situation, use common sense and whatever you have on hand to take care of yourself and your loved ones.

Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the attack, the first important decision is deciding whether to stay or go.

You should understand and plan for both possibilities.

DEVELOP A FAMILY COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so plan how you will contact one another and review what you will do in different situations. Consider a plan where each family member calls, or e-mails, the same friend or relative in the event of an emergency. It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an out-of-state contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members. You may have trouble getting through, or the phone system may be down altogether, but be patient.

STAYING PUT: There are circumstances when staying put and creating a barrier between yourself and potentially contaminated air outside, a process known as "shelter-in-place," can be a matter of survival. Choose an interior room or one with as few windows and doors as possible. Consider precutting plastic sheeting to seal windows, doors and air vents. Each piece should be several inches larger than the space you want to cover so that you can duct tape it flat against the wall. Label each piece with the location of where it fits.

If you see large amounts of debris in the air, or if local authorities say the air is badly contaminated, you may want to "shelter-in-place." Quickly bring your family and pets inside, lock doors, and close windows, air vents and fireplace dampers.

Immediately turn off air conditioning, forced air heating systems, exhaust fans and clothes dryers. Take your emergency supplies and go into the room you have designated. Seal all windows, doors and vents. Watch TV, listen to the radio or check the Internet for instructions.

GETTING AWAY: Plan in advance how you will assemble your family and anticipate where you will go. Choose several destinations in different directions so you have options in an emergency. If you have a car, keep at least a half tank of gas in it at all times. Become familiar with alternate routes as well as other means of transportation out of your area. If you do not have a car, plan how you will leave if you have to. Take your emergency supply kit and lock the door behind you. If you believe the air may be contaminated, drive with your windows and vents closed and keep the air conditioning and heater turned off. Listen to the radio for instructions.

AT WORK AND SCHOOL: Think about the places where your family spends time: school, work and other places you frequent. Talk to your children's schools and your employer about emergency plans. Find out how they will communicate with families during an emergency. If you are an employer, be sure you have an emergency preparedness plan. Review and practice it with your employees. A community working together during an emergency also makes sense. Talk to your neighbors about how you can work together.

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BE INFORMED ABOUT WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN

SPECIFIC TERRORIST THREATS

A **BIOLOGICAL ATTACK** is the deliberate release of germs or other substances that can make you sick. Many agents must be inhaled, enter through a cut in the skin or eaten to make you sick.

A **CHEMICAL ATTACK** is the deliberate release of a toxic gas, liquid or solid that can poison people and the environment.

A **NUCLEAR BLAST** is an explosion with intense light and heat, a damaging pressure wave and widespread radioactive material that can contaminate the air, water and ground surfaces for miles around.

A **RADIATION THREAT** or "Dirty Bomb" is the use of common explosives to spread radioactive materials over a targeted area.

See WWW.READYSOUTHTEXAS.GOV for specific directions on how to respond to certain events. Be prepared to adapt this information to your personal circumstances and make every effort to follow instructions received from authorities on the scene. Above all, stay calm, be patient and think before you act. With these simple preparations, you can be ready for the unexpected.